The State Planning and Zoning Law provides that requirements placed on land development projects must be compatible with a community's General Plan. Therefore, storm water pollution control objectives for land development should be reflected in the appropriate policies, goals, and objectives of each Permittee's General Plan. Whenever elements of a Permittee's General Plan are significantly rewritten, the Permittee will incorporate watershed and storm water management considerations into the General Plan elements being rewritten. General Plan elements that may be particularly appropriate to reflect watershed and storm water quality considerations are:

growth management;

land use;

circulation (i.e., transportation);

public facilities;

open space; and

conservation.

When updating a General Plan, special attention should be given to how the plan addresses water quality protection, development goals and policies, open space goals and policies, preservation of or integration with natural features, and water conservation policies. Typically, most General Plans have provisions that protect water quality and the environment.

Adapting a General Plan to incorporate storm water quality concerns may be as simple as modifying existing text so that it specifically includes storm water quality and protection. The General Plan should include goals and policies in its various elements that are affected by land development, and which require mitigation of storm water quality impacts from land development projects. The General Plan land use map should conform to revised storm water quality policies and eliminate conflicts among land use districts, permitted land uses, and storm water-specific goals and policies.

Storm water quality may be influenced by controlling the type, location, and density of development. Such controls may be established through policies commonly found in the land use and open space elements of the General Plan (e.g., development policies, development location guidelines, open space policies, policies on preservation of and integration with natural features). It is usually advisable to establish such policies through a storm water quality master plan, which evaluates proposed development patterns, their impact on the environment, and the pollution control effectiveness of these

policies. Sections of the General Plan that address overall water quality, environmental protection, water resources conservation, and landscaping may be modified. A section could be added that requires compliance with existing NPDES permits and the Clean Water Act. Changes or additions to General Plans should include objectives such as:

minimizing, to the maximum extent practicable, the impacts from storm water runoff on the biological integrity of natural drainage systems and water bodies;

putting emphasis on cumulative storm water impacts and the need to mitigate cumulative impacts to less than significant levels;

maximizing, to the maximum extent practicable, the percentage of permeable surfaces to allow more percolation of storm water runoff into the ground;

minimizing, to the maximum extent practicable, the amount of storm water directed to impermeable areas and to the municipal separate storm sewer system;

building storm water pollution prevention requirements into other existing requirements (e.g., landscaping) to ensure that requirements do not themselves indirectly encourage practices that can cause pollution;

requiring proposed projects to be conditioned to comply with California's general storm water permits for construction and industrial activities and the Clean Water Act; and

requiring proposed projects to be conditioned with appropriate permanent controls to reduce storm water pollutant loads discharged from the development site (including parking lots) to the maximum extent practicable.

Additional policies, goals, or objectives may be beneficial in General Plans to stress the importance of storm water quality control or to implement certain types of storm water management programs. Changing a General Plan to incorporate storm water quality concerns may be a simple process of adding the word "quality" to items referencing storm water quantity or adding the word "storm water" to items referencing water quality.